

Bridge Fund for several agricultural and micro credit initiatives in Tibet. The remaining \$250,000 will be made available through a competitive process for NGO's who qualify for project funding.

CONCLUSION

The treatment of Tibetans by the Chinese government over the past 50 years has been inconsistent with international norms and standards of respect for fundamental human rights. The Dalai Lama has shown enormous courage in accepting the impracticality of insisting on independence and calling for "genuine autonomy" within Chinese sovereignty. Chinese spokesmen have responded by stating their willingness to engage in a dialogue with the Dalai Lama if he renounces independence and pro-independence activities. The problem appears to be solvable. Ultimately it comes down to a question of will, especially on Beijing's side. There are significant Chinese interests that could be advanced in moving forward on Tibetan autonomy. The Dalai Lama is still active and healthy; his prestige will be crucial in carrying the opinion of the Diaspora and most Tibetans in the autonomous regions. Only he can ensure the successful implementation of a negotiated settlement.

Conversely, maintaining order over an unhappy population is a drain on the resources of a still developing country. Widespread knowledge of China's human rights offenses in Tibet has brought about pressure on China's leadership to explain its Tibet policy to the international community. My impression is that the situation in Tibet deeply troubles China's international partners and foreign leaders and that this is affecting their diplomatic engagement in Western countries.

Since China's number one priority is the stability and the unity of the PRC, Chinese leaders may find that a more enlightened policy toward Tibet would be an important step toward enhancing the respect they have earned from the economic transformation of their country. It is my sincere hope that parties will resume dialogue that looked so promising in 1998. Preservation of Tibet's unique cultural and religious traditions depends on it.

In closing, I would like to thank you for this opportunity to testify today. I look forward to working with you another year on this extremely important issue.

TRIBUTE TO BASTROP HIGH SCHOOL ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

HON. RON PAUL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 6, 2000

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Speaker, today I pay tribute to the Student Council Energy and Environment Committee of Bastrop High School in Bastrop, Texas. This dedicated group of students has been working diligently on projects to increase awareness about energy conservation and the environment.

Some of their projects include trash pick-up, recycling, efficient driving and car maintenance training, and coordination of Earth Day festivities in Bastrop on the third weekend of April. They have also spread information by way of books, pamphlets and posters around their community. Not only has their work improved the safety and appearance of the cam-

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

pus and surrounding area, but it has also increased feelings of school unity and pride among the students.

Their local focus is an example to all of us that local involvement is key to solving most problems faced by Americans today. I am proud to represent such a responsible and dedicated group of young people.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me in saluting the Student Council of Bastrop High School. This is an excellent way to show sincere appreciation for those who take the time and energy to improve their communities for themselves and others.

HONORING THE WAKE FOREST UNIVERSITY MEN'S BASKETBALL TEAM

HON. RICHARD BURR

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 6, 2000

Mr. BURR of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, although yesterday was the day for the Michigan State men's and University of Connecticut women's basketball teams to shine, I wanted to take this opportunity to recognize the winners of the other national championship that took place during the month of March. While North Carolina and Duke both performed admirably during the NCAA Men's Basketball Tournament, only one team from Tobacco Road returned home this past weekend with the champion's hardware and only one team from the ACC will begin next year's season on a winning streak—my hometown Wake Forest Demon Deacons—the past Thursday evening in Madison Square Garden the Deacons easily disposed of Notre Dame to win its first national invitational tournament. Now the critics of this tournament will be quick to call Wake Forest the "65th best team in the Nation"—a reference to not making the NCAA field of 64. And several Wake fans, in midst of a 3–9 mid-season slump, might have taken a 65th place finish, but the Deacons, led by Coach Dave Odom and his staff chose to turn this season around, winning 8 of its last 9 games, salvaging a 22–14 record and a national championship. Credit for this victory goes to all the Deacon players, from leading scorer Darius Songalia and NIT Tournament MVP Robert O'Kelley to strong bench support from Craig Dawson and Josh Shoemaker. The Deacons losing only two players from this year's team, look to carry the momentum of this late season success into next year's season, when they hope to readily hand over the NIT championship trophy as they make their way to the ultimate goal—the NCAA Tournament.

Once again—congratulations to Wake Forest.

H. RES. 458, AUTISM AWARENESS

HON. RICHARD H. BAKER

OF LOUISIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 6, 2000

Mr. BAKER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to acknowledge the importance of autism awareness, as

well as to offer my support and to express my admiration for my constituents, Shelly and Aiden Reynolds, for their hard work and dedication in co-founding Unlocking Autism.

Unlocking Autism is an organization dedicated to raising public awareness about autism as well as raising money for biomedical research. This organization has launched a national awareness project called Open Your Eyes, and is striving to collect 58,000 pictures of persons with autism from across the United States. This collection will debut in Washington, DC from April 5th thru 9th of this year.

The Hear-Their-Silence Rally is a response to the fact that autism and related conditions have been estimated to occur in as many as 1 in 500 individuals (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention 1997). This statistic is higher than the incidences of Multiple Sclerosis, Downs Syndrome, or Cystic Fibrosis. At least 400,000 people in the United States are affected, and yet little is known about this disease.

When people become aware of a disease, they will begin to strive for, and demand action to further the understanding and prevention of that disease.

To this end, I am pleased to be sponsoring legislation that will express the sense of the House of Representatives. I urge the Citizens' Stamp Advisory Committee to recommend to the Postmaster General a commemorative postage stamp which would further the cause of autism awareness and place autism before the American people.

Shelly and Aiden Reynolds have used the reality of their son Liam's diagnosis of autism to fuel their fight to bring this disease to the fore front of national awareness. Countless others have joined their efforts. A commemorative stamp would give a face to those individuals afflicted with autism. Let us give them a voice

CHRISTINE BELL—A GOOD CITIZEN

HON. JERRY MORAN

OF KANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 6, 2000

Mr. MORAN of Kansas. Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to submit this outstanding essay on "good citizenship" for the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD. It was written by one of my constituents, Christine Bell, a high school student in Morland, KS who won first place in an essay contest sponsored by the National Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution in Hays, Kansas. Christine's essay reminds us all that it is an honor to be a citizen of the United States and that the key to maintaining our freedoms and liberties is to exercise them. She pays tribute to our founding fathers, the veterans, and active military who put their lives on the line for our country and reminds us all what has been risked to protect the red, white and blue. Christine also points out that there are numerous ways to serve our country in addition to the military. Voting in elections and removing your hat during the Star Spangled Banner are to small ways that Christine mentions people can show good citizenship.

I was extremely impressed with Christine Bell's essay and her belief in the need for